

FR. FERDINAND MEDITS CM BACK IN STEYL

Fr. Medits' activities in Steyl

On August 2, 1888 Fr. Medits came once again from Vienna to Steyl. Having given a retreat for the priests of the mission house, on August 11 he started the novitiate for the elder priests who had not yet had a proper novitiate. This program was to last for one year. After his return to Vienna on August 28, Fr. Arnold wrote to China: The novitiate program which Fr. Medits had begun, Fr. Wegener and he (Arnold) had to continue.

Fr. Medits' criticism of Fr. Arnold

Before Fr. Medits returned to Steyl he wrote a fairly long letter to Fr. Arnold and touched on several points which seemed very important following his conversations with confreres in Steyl.

Being the founder, Fr. Arnold surely had to be strict; yet it must not be a cold strictness without any feelings for the confreres; rather it had to be motherly strictness which attracts and builds up. The founder must learn to trust the confreres. "Signs of personal attention are important, for example, on birthdays or name days, on the anniversaries of ordination and profession. The rector should offer one Mass a week for his subjects." He should mention items of news taken from the activities of the Society. Furthermore "the rector should settle on a definite schedule for the community" and shouldn't change so much. By 1888 "the community numbered 230 students and 100 Brothers. For a community of that size, frequent changes in the daily schedule had to be avoided. The need for a fixed order was all the greater because now there were several departments in the house with different persons in charge" (*ibid.*, pp. 183-184).

Fr. Arnold learns

Fr. Arnold accepted the criticism; he "drew up a calendar of the name days of the members and regularly sent greetings on those occasions to the confreres overseas. He began to give weekly conferences to the priests, and picked out bits of information from his correspondence to keep them informed of what was going on in the Society. He called meetings of the different councils - general, provincial and local. All this, of course, did not happen overnight but took place gradually. In the photographs that were taken of him, we can discern a progressive change from the stern features of the teacher - disciplinarian to the more serene countenance, if not of a mother, then at least of a father". Fr. Arnold learned, "he adapted himself and became the servant of his enterprise" (*ibid.*, p. 184).

Blessed New Year

Trust in the Lord with courage!

It is impossible for him to desert those who firmly trust in him

St. Arnold Janssen to St. Joseph Freinademetz



Divine Word Missionaries Secretariat Arnold Janssen Steyl

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The Arnoldus Family Story

OFFER OF A NEW MISSION

During the first months of 1888 Cardinal Simeoni, the Prefect of the Propaganda in Rome, asked Fr. Arnold to send missionaries to the archdiocese of Dakar (today Bangladesh). On June 8, 1888 Fr. Arnold sent a negative reply to the Cardinal: "He said they did not have the necessary personnel. Besides, only older missionaries and those of proven virtue could be sent there, for in one part of the territory men and women went around completely unclothed. 'I do not want to send missionaries who are too young to such tribes and I don't have any older ones.' Anyway, Bishop Anzer was demanding more missionaries for South Shantung. 'Your Eminence, what use is it to begin new missions if we cannot properly look after the mission we already have?'" (in Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p.674).

PROGRESS: TRAM CONNECTION BETWEEN VENLO (STATION) AND STEYL



In August 1888 the "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart) announced the dates for the autumn retreat in Steyl. At the same time the readers were informed of the introduction of a horse tram line from Venlo to Steyl and back. Eight times a day the tram travelled in each direction and one trip costed 30 pennies.

PROGRESS ON THE WAY TO THE FOUNDATION OF A CONGREGATION OF MISSIONARY SISTERS

Life in the little convent of the "Three Lindens"

Helena Stollenwerk, Hendrina Stenmanns, Theresia Sicke and Gertrud Hege-
mann were the first candidates for a congregation of missionary sisters. The way to the eventual foundation included several stages: The first one ended on July 14, 1888. During the first stage the candidates were domestic workers helping the

German Sisters of Divine Providence who took care of kitchen and laundry. When the last Sisters of Divine Providence left St. Michael's mission house for good on July 12, 1888, the four women had to leave St. Michael's as well. They found a new home in a small house near the mission house which Fr. Arnold had bought from the tailor Thürlings. About this house Mother Maria wrote in her chronicle that they "called it the little white house of the Three Lindens. Beside the house were three linden trees and they were to encourage our zeal in the practice of the three theological virtues, faith, hope and charity" (*Life in the Convent of the Three Lindens*, from the chronicles of M. Maria, Helena Stollenwerk and M. Andrea, Gertrud Hegemann, *In their own words...*2, compiled and transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, p. 6).

In the convent of the "Three Lindens"

The little house was to be a real little convent; Mother Maria writes: "On the street front there was a sturdy fence; in the centre opposite the front door was a small gate on the side of which was a rod, attached to a wire with a bell inside the house. Any-

one who needed to come in could ring to draw attention.

"You came first into a small reception room. There was a fairly large, simple but attractive crucifix and a small picture of the nativity embellished at the top with the words, 'What the Saviour's crib has to tell us', and below with the verse: 'Make the



shrine of your heart into a crib where Mary will faithfully keep watch. And invite St. Joseph, too, to lovingly carry out his role as protector.' This picture was especially precious to us because we dearly hoped that here we would begin our true religious life" (*Life in the Three Lindens*, p. 8). And, so Mother Maria continued, "we wanted to prepare ourselves as well as possible for it through prayer and work and faithful observation of our daily order." In the little room there were also a small table and two chairs. "The rest of the house was our cloister."

The daily order in the convent of the three lindens (on weekdays)

| | |
|----------|--|
| 4.25 am | Rising |
| 4.45 am | Morning prayer and meditation |
| 5.25 am | At the ringing of the church bells, walk to the mission house church |
| 6.05 am | Back to our convent |
| 6.15 am | Back to the convent on days of communion, afterwards cleaning |
| 6.50 am | Breakfast in silence, work |
| 9.00 am | Second breakfast for those who need it |
| 9.15 am | Silent prayer in the convent chapel |
| 9.20 am | Spiritual reading and work |
| 11.53 am | Examination of conscience and spiritual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament |

| | |
|--|--|
| 12.00 noon | Lunch, work. |
| 4.00 pm | Afternoon coffee, 5 minutes prayer in the convent chapel, ... 1 hour recreation, conversation together with light work. |
| 7.00 pm | Evening meal. Then conversation and recreation for 45 minutes – (not on Saturday evenings) |
| 9.15 pm | Evening prayer. On Mondays and Thursdays at 9 pm |
| 9.30 pm | Retiring for the night (from the chronicle of Mother Maria) |
| On Sundays and holidays the rising was at 4.45 am and retiring at 8.30 pm. | |

Visitors to the convent

Visitors were received in the small reception room. In case of visiting relatives the women could meet them there. All others, however, "who came on errands for the Mission House and so on, settled their business here. In the wall there was a window, a small pane of which could be opened and closed from the inside. The glass was painted over and in front of it there was a semi-transparent curtain. If we had to speak to anyone, we opened the window pane so that we could hear."

The living quarters of the women

Within the house there was a little chapel, a bedroom with six little cells, separated by curtains. "All that was in each was a bed with the basic necessities, a small cross, two or three little paper pictures that had been cut out of the 'Stadt Gottes' or the 'Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart', the most necessary toilet articles and a small mat. We hung our clothes on nails on the wall or on the bedposts." Another room was the workroom. In this room was a sewing machine, a table, a chair for each one and a stove. Here the laundry was folded and repaired, e.g. socks darned, underwear and bedlinen, etc., mended. "Leaving the workroom we went along at the side towards the garden and entered the kitchen. There was a small cooking stove, the necessary items for making coffee, a table and a small cabinet." "The kitchen also served as a dining room and at times for folding the laundry, as well. We took the chairs from the workroom to the kitchen at mealtimes. A small passage led from the kitchen to the yard where the pump was." Then there was a small room "that looked as though it had served as a stable for goats in former times. It had been fitted out so that socks and stockings could be hung up there, those that were not finished and those that had been darned as well, until they were packed into the baskets and sent to the Mission House. All the windows of the house were painted over. We could hardly go into the attic, above the rooms, because there was a danger that the ceiling would fall down" (Mother Maria, Chronicle, in *Life in the Convent of the Three Lindens*, pp. 8-12).

The four women were content with their little convent, it reminded them so much of the poor little house of Nazareth, as Mother Maria wrote in her chronicle.

EPISCOPAL APPROBATION OF THE SEPTEMBER 1885 RULE

On August 1, 1888 Bishop Boermans of Roermond approved the September 1885 Rule. The archbishop of Vienna approved the Rule for the archdiocese of Vienna and forwarded it to the ministry of education (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila 1975, p. 207).

under the German protectorate. "So I expressed my readiness to write to Mgr. Anzer", Fr. Arnold remarks. (*ibid.*).

This was only the beginning of a long series of negotiations about a mission in Africa and it was only in 1892 that the mission in Togo was entrusted to the Steyl missionaries.



MEETING WITH LUDWIG VON WINDTHORST

In Berlin Fr. Arnold also met the leader of the Catholic Zentrum (Centre) Party of Germany, Ludwig von Windthorst. Arnold informed him about the negotiations with the government and asked him "to keep up his interest in the freedom of Catholic missions in the German colonies". Furthermore he asked him why the German government itself was "taking steps to promote Catholic missions in its colonies." Windthorst told Fr. Arnold that he had demanded that the act regarding freedom of religion be applied in the German colonies. If the

government gave in to his demand they would have to admit the Jesuits, who had been expelled from Germany at the beginning of the Kulturkampf (cultural war). But the government does not want that, and so "they want other Catholic missionaries to come in so that they can say, We do not need the Jesuits" (*ibid.*).

CALL FOR THE FOUNDING OF A SEMINARY FOR AFRICA

On April 20, 1890 Pope Leo XIII wrote to Archbishop Krementz of Cologne expressing his wish that the Catholics in Germany take "a stronger interest in mission work in Africa. To this end the German bishops should open a seminary specifically for Africa" The Archbishop then invited Fr. Arnold to visit him which Fr. Arnold did on May 2 and 3 (*ibid.*, p. 629).

LATEST NEWS FROM STEYL – APRIL 1890

From April 2-5, 1890 a retreat course was preached in St. Michael's mission house for teachers and students. 134 teachers and 30 students attended.

From April 5-8, 1890, 108 men attended the retreat for married men (only) (*Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote* [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], vol. 17, May 1890).

On April 14, the summer semester begins in Steyl with 266 students (ibid.)



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The Arnoldus Family Story

DECEMBER 8, 1889 - A SPECIAL DAY IN STEYL AND IN CHINA

In Steyl

December 8, 1889 Helena Stollenwerk and her five companions spent the first day in their new convent, the former capuchin monastery, nearby St. Michael's mission house. From that day on they were no longer workers employed by the mission house who hoped to become missionary sisters one day. Rather now they were sister candidates destined for the formation of a religious institute. Today we celebrate December 8, 1889 as foundation day of the SSpS missionary sisters.

In China

On December 8, 1889 in Puoli /South Shantung, Bishop Anzer ordained the first two priests from and for the Apostolic Vicariate of South Shantung entrusted to SVD. They were the deacons Matthew Chao Yung-yung and Joseph Hsia Wenlin. "The pontifical High Mass and the rite of ordination were uplifting for all who attended. The two candidates for ordination were in tears, so greatly were they touched." Singers and musicians, gun salutes and fireworks gave the celebration a festive framework (Richard Hartwich SVD, *Steyler Missionare in China* [Steyl missionaries in China], *Analecta SVD* 61, Rome 1983, p. 158).

ARNOLD JANSSEN - MISSIONARY FOR THE WORLD

St. Gabriel/Austria

On December 6, 1889 Fr. Arnold wrote to the Rector of St. Gabriel, his brother John, that the confreres in St. Gabriel had to pay the expenses for their upkeep themselves and they had to collect money for a further building. To this Arnold's brother John replied on December 11 with the suggestion to begin with a printing press in order to generate an income.

On December 26 Arnold answered: "Naturally, you do not have to worry as if I was going to let you down... It is clear that you have to build, but with what? The Lord must send the money" (Josef Alt, *Die Geschichte des Missionshauses St. Gabriel* [The history of St. Gabriel's mission house], p. 46).

And so on March 24, 1890 the cornerstone for a second building was laid. "Full of gratitude, at the end of the ceremony the residents of St. Gabriel sang the song of praise of our dear Mother of God, 'My soul glorifies the Lord!', for from now on one stone after the other will be added to the sanctuary of St. Gabriel and it will grow high

up to his and the Highest God's honor and serve the growth of the kingdom of God" (Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart, vol. 17, April 1890).

South Shantung

Bishop Anzer wanted the Franciscans working in the Apostolic Vicariate of North Shantung to leave some communities of those who had long been Christian to South Shantung. But they did not want to. So on December 12, 1889 Fr. Arnold suggested to Bishop Anzer to send the mail concerning this matter to Rome via Steyl. "If you send all this via Steyl, it will give me the opportunity to add my own opinion. You will get results only when both the Franciscans and Propaganda see that they HAVE to. So you can boldly write them both, saying that this is a life-and-death issue for your mission, and therefore, you felt obliged to repeat this petition until it finds a hearing. The letters do not have to be long, but decisive in presenting convincing reasons" (Josef Alt, ed., transl. Frank Mihalic, Vincent Ferrer, *Arnold Janssen, Letters to China*, vol. I, 1879-1897, *Analecta SVD* - 83/1, p. 288).

Argentina

Letter of January 18, 1890

On January 18, 1890 Fr. Arnold wrote to Superior Becher in Argentina: "How are you over there in a foreign country? Have the first difficulties been overcome? Or is it as if only now they really are beginning? And how are things with your courage and trust in God? I think they are not wavering and divine help will not be lacking. Try to win your confrere [Rev. Löcken] over to yourself! One of the means for that is: Try to get to know his wishes and fulfill them where and how you can with personal sacrifices on your part, in so far as it seems possible for you..." (Josef Alt, ed., *Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], *Analecta SVD* -65/1, vol. I, Rome 1889, P. 3-4).

Letter of February 1, 1890

Fr. Arnold wrote another letter to Argentina: Dear Rev. Becher! Dear Rev. Löcken! [at the time the Latin word Pater / Father in English, which in Germany was the title of a religious priest, was not yet used in the SVD]. Dearest friends and confreres in the Lord! So the Lord God has led you, happy and healthy, to the other hemisphere, and when you receive this letter you will already have been there 5 months and at least in one *Departamento* you got to know the country and the people. I am sure you have acquired some knowledge of the language during this time. I think furthermore that you have tried your best to observe those pious exercises which are partly prescribed in our congregation or commonly used, for instance daily meditation and examination of conscience twice a day, spiritual reading, weekly confession and similar things. And if once in a while you have not been able to do all this, you must not let it become almost daily routine ... To accept pastoral work in the whole province cannot be our goal. The result would be a lot of envy and persecution. In my opinion religious have to be like flying troops or like salt, sprinkled here and there, in order to influence the surrounding spiritually (*ibid.*, p. 6).

Togo (Remote preparation for the Steyl Mission in Togo)

Prince Bishop Kopp of Breslau and Fr. Arnold Janssen

On February 16, 1890 the Prussian envoy to the Holy See informed Cardinal Simeoni, the Prefect of the Propaganda, that the German colonies of Cameroon and Togo were open for German Catholic missionaries. Prince Bishop Kopp of Breslau, who had good connections with the government in Berlin and was even a member of the Prussian House of Lords, heard about this. So on March 5, 1890 he wrote to Fr. Arnold: "I believe it likely that Your Reverence will be invited to Berlin in the near future to give your views on various matters to a certain government department. Topics to be discussed will include acceptance of mission work in the German colonies and protectorates, whether it is necessary or not to establish a mission seminary in Germany itself and many other matters. Your Reverence will then be in a position to submit proposals and make requests, and you will have considerable bargaining power." If he, Kopp, were informed early enough and if he could, "I would come to Berlin and brief you in detail before you begin the discussions, perhaps accompanied by me" (Arnold Janssen, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, *Journey in Faith*, Steyler Verlag, Nettetal 2002, p. 624).

Fr. Arnold answers the Prince Bishop

On March 14, 1890 Fr. Arnold replied to the Bishop: "In connection with the business you mentioned, I spent the first few days after the receipt of your letter doing some research on the German colonies. I notice, however, that due to the small number of people and the unhealthy climate these territories are not exactly attractive for permanent residence." But these countries, too, need to find their own missionaries who will work for their Christianization. He was also happy that the German government believed in the valuable contribution which missionaries could make. Since the German government wanted German missionaries for the German colonies, he was willing to send his missionaries there, but only under certain conditions (*ibid.*, p. 625).

Fr. Arnold in Berlin

As Prince Bishop Kopp had guessed, Fr. Arnold was invited to Berlin. On March 28 and 29 he was in Berlin. To his brother John in St. Gabriel he wrote on March 29:



"I arrived here yesterday morning and had two meetings with Mgr. Kopp who conducted the negotiations with the Minister of Education for me. My conditions, which he fully and entirely supported, were: 1. Protection of the missionaries, their support by provision of land, free travel in the mission or at least cheaper fares. 2. The permit to establish a mission house in Germany and exemption of a) priests and b) lay brothers from military service" (*ibid.*, p. 628). Bishop Kopp reported "that points 1 and 2a) would encounter no difficulties; concerning point 2b) the minister wanted to negotiate with other ministers." But in return the government demanded that the Steyl missionaries would give up the French protectorate in China and place themselves

ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF THE STEYL STUDENTS IN ROME

May 30, 1890

On this day Fr. Arnold wrote to Superior Rev. Becher in Argentina about the academic success of some Steyl students in Rome: “Rev. Colling and Schumachers are Doctores theologiae [Doctors of theology] and Rev. Giese and Gier recently did their first theological exams at the Propaganda and received in all subjects the best marks which the Propaganda gives” (Arnold Janssen, ed. Jos. Alt, *Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], vol I, p. 16).

NEWS OF THE MISSIONARY SISTER CANDIDATES

June 2, 1890

During the Kulturkampf [cultural war] in Prussia, Notre Dame Sisters from the German city of Essen had been expelled from their convent there and found a new home in Steyl. After the end of the Kulturkampf they returned to Essen and sought to sell their house in Steyl. On June 2, Fr. Arnold accompanied by the prefect of students, Fr. Wegener, went to the Sisters to negotiate with them about buying the house. The Sisters were asking 60,000 Marks – too much for Fr. Arnold (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 340).

June 12, 1890

On this day, Bishop Boermans of Roermond presented in Rome Fr. Arnold’s request to set up an oratory with tabernacle for the *virgines* (virgins) who had been living in community for two years, *ut pro missionibus possint laborare* (that they may work for the missions). Thus far Mother Maria and her companions had been attending Holy Mass in the Upper Church of St. Michael’s. Our SVD historian Fr. Bornemann writes that very likely “that was the first written communication about the missionary Sisters to the Roman Curia”(Fritz Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p. 229).

June 20/22, 1890

June 20 the negotiations regarding the purchase of the Notre Dame Sisters’ convent came to a conclusion. The Sisters’ representative “came today and offered the Sisters’ house for sale once again. We finally agreed on 48,000 Marks.”

Two days later, June 22, the representative’s letter was delivered, “setting out once again the conditions of purchase, and this assured us that these conditions had been approved by the Convent and by the Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Fischer” (Jos. Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 340).



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The Arnoldus Family Story

THE PROTECTORATE QUESTION FOR GERMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES IN CHINA

**April 19, 1890: Letter of Fr. Arnold Janssen to Cardinal Simeoni,
Prefect of Propaganda Fide**

In his letter to the Cardinal, Fr. Arnold expressed the following thoughts among others:

In China France was the protective power of the German Catholic Missionaries, the missionaries from Steyl included. The German government wanted to take the place of the French government and issue missionary passports for German citizens. Fr. Arnold knew very well that the German government would make the permission for a mission house in Germany and the mission in Togo dependent on his decision regarding the protectorate question. However, in his opinion “the decision rests in the first place with the head of our mission, Most Reverend Bishop Anzer”. He had to ask himself “whether any adverse consequences will follow if he accepts the German protectorate for those of his missionaries who are not German nationals, or for his relations with other Catholic missionaries in China who are under the French protectorate and who would not like to see any infringement of that protectorate” (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith, The Missionary Life of Arnold Janssen*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p.479).

DEVELOPMENTS IN ARGENTINA

April 26, 1890: Letter of Arnold Janssen to Superior Becher

(Arnold Janssen, ed. Jos. Alt, *Briefe nach Südamerika* (Letters to South America), vol. 1, 1890-99, *Analecta SVD* – 65/1, pp. 8-11)

Permission to begin in Santa Fe / Esperanza

Superior Rev. Becher had sent a letter to Fr. Arnold informing him of the number of German settlers in the dioceses of Buenos Aires and Santa Fe. However, Fr. Arnold would have liked to have received information about the number of German settlers in other dioceses as well. Then Fr. Arnold wrote: If everything is “as it seems to me according to your report, I agree to Santa Fe being the place where we will make the initial beginning and for the time being it will be the center. - If Santa Fe is chosen, then judging from your and Rev. Löcken’s description, it is pretty certain that Esperanza is the most appropriate place.”

Building

Rev. Becher had told Fr. Arnold that he had already bought bricks. However, in Fr. Arnold's estimate "100,000 will hardly be enough. [In Steyl] we needed 400,000 for our first building." And he continues: "In God's name you may make the beginning there [in Esperanza]! May the Holy Spirit give his blessing through his grace!"

Pastoral work among all nationalities

Furthermore Fr. Arnold wrote: "Based on your explanation, I agree that in your pastoral efforts you need not limit yourself only to the Germans, but as far as possible include all nationalities living there. In the long run you will need a printing press and an elementary and high school. However, before I agree to such more intensive activities I will turn to the respective spiritual offices."

Wish for recommendation by the Bishop of Parana

In his letter to Rev. Superior Becher Fr. Arnold also expressed the wish that the bishop of Parana write a few kind lines to him to the effect, "that he was willing to accept the priests of our house joyfully into his diocese and to support their activities to the best of his ability, in particular that he would be happy for them to publish Catholic magazines, particularly for the immigrants, and that they would establish Catholic schools for elementary and higher education. – I then would have something which I could present in Rome, as that is necessary, and at the same time I would have the proof that the Ordinary is accepting of your activities. It would be good if the two of you introduced yourselves to him, in case you have not yet done so, and that then you would tell him about my request. This you should give him also in writing, so that none of the points which I want to be made would be missing in his letter to me. This you could do either already at your first visit or better, after you become convinced that he agrees with the publication of Catholic papers and the establishment of elementary and high schools by us. Initially simply assure him of my respect and, perhaps a few days later, inform him in writing of my wish (as if I had written only now) and tell him that regarding those issues I would like to hear the opinion of his Episcopal grace.

God the Holy Spirit bless you, all your activities, your zeal; may he give you light and strength and may he bring everything to its completion. Dedicate to him also your first house and church."

PS (post scriptum)

Rev. Becher had informed Fr. Arnold also about the size of the property he wanted to buy. However, Fr. Arnold replied: "You think an area the size of 100x100 meters is big. For a few people, yes. But if something good is to be built, it is too small by far. You do the right thing when you first acquire more land before you start building. Later on it will be much more expensive. What a great task is waiting for you there. You must adopt the heart of the Good Shepherd and open the kingdom of heaven to as many sheep as possible." Then Fr. Arnold recommends the establishment of a house for the sons of Catholics whose dwellings were scattered, in order to teach them "truths of our religion and to prepare them for first holy communion. Such an institution must be filled throughout the whole year. And when one group goes the next must

come." Girls must also be taught by Sisters. Therefore Rev. Becher ought to buy a large property. "10-25 hectares would not be too much."

At the end of his letter Fr. Arnold adds this piece of news: "An African mission seems to be on the horizon. I am negotiating with Berlin. Please pray for it, both of you. But don't write about it to Europe."

NEWS FROM ST. GABRIEL'S /Mödling (AUSTRIA) – FEAR OF WORKERS' UNREST

May 1, 1890

On May 1 there was a fear of workers' unrest. "Everywhere workers stopped working. The military had been stationed in Mödling in case of unrest. The fire brigade was on stand-by as well. The mission house was advised not to let the builders work. However, the builders themselves wanted to work. And so they did. But at 9 am there was a May devotion to our Lady for the workers in the small chapel. Some students sang polyphone Marian songs which impressed the workers. We saw tears running down the weather-tanned cheeks of these simple people. Afterwards, at the building site the workers were full of joy and praise for the 'marvelous devotion'. 'If you had a big chapel or church people from the whole region would come to you,' some said (*Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote* (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart), 17, No. 9, June 1890, p. 72).

NEWS REGARDING THE PROTECTORATE QUESTION IN CHINA

May 4, 1890

The Propaganda Fide "ordered Arnold Janssen and Bishop Anzer by telegram not to enter into negotiations with the Berlin government but to wait for the opinion of the Propaganda" (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 481). The Propaganda had handed the whole issue over to the papal Secretary of State.

THE AFRICA SEMINARY DEMANDED BY POPE LEO XIII

May 9, 1890

Prince Bishop Kopp of Breslau advised Archbishop Krementz of Cologne "first to make all the necessary arrangements with Janssen, perhaps also ask Amrhein [the founder of the missionary Benedictines] to say what he intends to do. For the moment other mission societies are not necessary, these two are enough" (*ibid.*, p. 629)

May 14, 1890

Bishop Korum of Trier, who had been one of the co-consecrators of Bishop Anzer in Steyl, is opposed to entrusting the Steyl missionaries with the African seminary. "I have a feeling the enterprise is still not on a firm basis, the students' studies are incomplete and the whole situation very uncertain." But "he was ready to correct his rather harsh judgement if those in Cologne had a more favorable impression" (*ibid.*).

visionary Miss Leitner. The two groups of students were 26 philosophy students and 17 theology students who had just completed their first year of novitiate. One year after the opening of St. Gabriel's, the house numbered 30 Brothers, more than 80 students in philosophy and theology, and eight priests. The daily order and class schedule were the same as in Steyl: "silence, study time, written exercises, class work, discipline, management of community property, reception of the sacraments and general rules for students, all were the same" (*ibid.*, p. 211).

September 27, 1890 – Move to the Notre Dame Sisters' convent

On September 27, 10 sister postulants moved from the former Capuchin monastery into their new home, the Notre Dame convent. It was a Saturday evening between 5 and 6 o'clock. Fr. Steger "carried Our Savior in the Blessed Sacrament from the Capuchin Monastery to our present convent", where we "10 sisters waited at the big entrance with lighted candles," Mother Maria remembers. A benediction with sacramental blessing followed. Between 8 and 8.30 pm a Brother brought the supper from the mission house kitchen (see "In their own words..." 4, Jacqueline Mulberge, transl., *Notre Dame Convent, First Motherhouse of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 7-8).



St. Raphael's College, Rome, Via Sistina 118

ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST SVD BISHOP IN ROME

On September 14, 1890 Bishop Anzer left Shanghai on his way to Rome. In the evening of September 27 he suddenly arrived at the home of the Roman SVD community. He had walked from the railway station to the St. Raphael's college, Via Sistina 118. He was wearing a short jacket, a blue, torn pair of trousers and a light blue necktie. He borrowed the episcopal vestments from a pawn shop (Wilhelm Bungert, *Licht und Schatten im Lebensbild Anzers* [Light and Shadow in the Biography of Anzer], *Nova et Vetera*, 1971, p. 316). For the next three weeks the little college turned into a very busy place: Since Anzer was to make a choice between keeping the French protectorate and the German one, the French ambassador visited him seventeen times, the Prussian 20 times. Another visitor was Cardinal Lavigerie, the founder of the White Fathers and Sisters. They all were received in a small dim, windowless corner which received its light only through the glass window in the door (in Bornemann, P. *Wilhelm Gier, Analecta SVD* – 50, p. 40).



The Arnoldus Family Story

NEWS OF THE MISSION SISTERS' CONGREGATION

Advertisement of the new foundation in St. Michael's Almanac of 1891

In August 1890 the St. Michael's Almanac for 1891 was sold. The Almanac was the third publication of St. Michael's mission house and was published once a year. It combined a calendar with short stories and some interesting information. Towards the end of the calendar we read the following advertisement for the new foundation:

"A short while ago a house has been founded also for missionary sisters. These are sisters who will be working in the house in Steyl and later on they will also be active in the foreign missions, in particular for women. This new house for the sisters will be under the direction of St. Michael's mission house.

Besides the sisters already mentioned, some sisters will be accepted into the house who see it as their vocation to take up women's activities in greater seclusion and to pray with special zeal for the missions and the overall task of the Society to God the Holy Spirit whose adoration and veneration we particularly promote." The new foundation, therefore, was to be a congregation of Missionary Sisters consisting of two branches - one active and one contemplative.

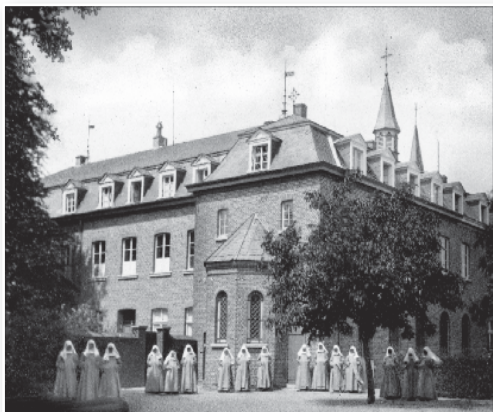
Result of the advertisement

The Almanac carried the advertisement "to 120,000 families." At the end of the year there were so many applications that Fr. Arnold was able to make a careful selection of postulants. "By the end of the year he had accepted eight; all but one eventually made their religious profession" (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p. 230).

August 17, 1890

On June 12, 1890 an application had been sent to Rome for an oratory with tabernacle in the convent of the future sisters. On July 6, 1890 Pope Leo XIII granted the permission and on August 17, 1890 Fr. Arnold celebrated the first holy Mass in the chapel and placed the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. "On the same day twenty nine years ago," Fr. Arnold wrote to Bishop Boermans in Roermond, "I had the joy of celebrating my first Mass" (*ibid.*, p. 229).

"The sanctuary lamp" in the chapel "was a symbol of the independence of the new community", SVD historian Fr. Bornemann writes (*ibid.*). Having daily Mass in their



Notre Dame convent,
today part of St. Gregory.

own chapel and having from now on a priest coming to them to hear their confessions, Mother Maria wrote: 'we did not have to leave the convent anymore'.

A new convent

August 22, 1890 the "notary contract" regarding the purchase of the Notre Dame convent "was concluded" with the Notre Dame Sisters who had returned to their original convent in Essen in Germany. So the Sister candidates would soon get another home (see Josef Alt, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, *Journey in Faith*, Nettetal 2002, p.340).

NEWS FROM ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION HOUSE IN STEYL

Residents

The St. Michael's Almanac of 1891 which was published in August 1890 reports: There were 33 priests, 160 Brothers, 260 students. The Brothers worked, for instance, as printers, bookbinders, tailors, shoemakers, bakers; others worked in the mill, butchery, brewery, carpenter shop, metalworking shop, smithy, plumber's and painter's workshops. Brothers worked as photographers, as well as in the garden and on the farm.

Retreat – August 1890

August 14-17: Retreat for Dutch laymen with 70 participants.

August 18-22: Retreat for German speaking laymen with 44 participants.

August 24-29: Retreat for German speaking teachers with 43 participants

ARGENTINA – BASIC DIRECTIONS FOR MISSION WORK

Letter of Fr. Arnold to Superior Becher (August 1, 1890)

Fr. Arnold wrote: "I am happy that our dear Lord is blessing your efforts in Esperanza, that people come in increasing numbers to church and receive the sacraments. When I read your report about the children's first holy communion, some quiet tears ran down my cheeks. I congratulate you also on the hostility towards you in the newspapers. However, be careful and try to avoid everything that could make others angry, insofar as you can avoid it. From your letters I gradually get an ever deeper understanding of the situation over there. It seems to me that I must not forbid you to accept parishes; perhaps in some places this is the only way that we can work. In future, do not reject parishes out of hand but give a thorough report about them..." Superior Becher thought of building a church. Fr. Arnold commented: "Concerning the

church, it will be best for you, to dedicate it to God the Holy Spirit. To him belong the first fruits. He is the hope of the present and the future. The Sacred Heart already has many devotees, but God the Holy Spirit has hardly any. He would bless Argentina and your mission. However, if you cannot do it, this is not meant to be an order for you" (Jos. Alt, ed., *Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], Vol I, 1890-1899, *Analecta SVD* 65/I, Rome 1989, pp. 19,20,21).

Correspondence Becher / Janssen, June 27, 1890 and August 13, 1890

On June 27, 1890 Superior Becher had written to Fr. Arnold that his confrere, Rev. Löcken, was greatly worried, "that we do not get sufficient funds from Steyl in order to complete our building, and those funds, which we receive, are sent so late that we will be forced to stop with the building just begun, and that would cause our enemies to ridicule us terribly." To this letter Fr. Arnold answered on August 13, 1890: "I am glad that you started courageously with the building. But I am not happy that you have sleepless nights. If I had had so little trust in God I would have worn myself out and I would not have achieved so much. Regarding help from our side, don't be surprised that I am hesitant. For the sake of our own survival I must establish the principle that each mission has to do its best to keep going. Only then can [the mission] be dispensed from it when the necessity is thoroughly obvious... Trust in God and try to seek to procure the lacking funds. On the other hand, you still have a father's house to which you can turn. But do what you can to help yourself (*ibid.*, p. 24).

EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER 1890

Constitutions for the future sister's congregation

Already in May and August 1890 Fr. Arnold had begun to work on the constitutions. Once it was clear that the next General Chapter would still be held in 1890, he decided to work in all seriousness on the constitutions, for the establishment of the sisters' congregation was one of the matters the Chapter was to deal with. On September 1, 1890 he therefore withdrew for about three weeks to the Ursuline Sisters' convent in Venlo. On September 5, 1890 he wrote to his brother John in St. Gabriel's: "Since 1 September, I am here at the Ursuline convent working on the rule for the Sisters. It is exhausting work. Fortunately I have been able to borrow a few rules which were not available at first. I feel sure the grace of the Holy Spirit is helping me, thanks to many prayers. Otherwise it would not have been possible to make such relatively good headway. I am also taking notes. I must follow the revealed will of the Holy Spirit. I think that once everything is down on paper and properly organized, the rest will be much easier. The rule of Sempelveld (Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus) is a great help because it has many detailed regulations" (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, Manila, p. 231-232).

New students for St. Gabriel's – September 22, 1890

On September 22, Fr. Arnold and the novice director Fr. Eikenbrock travelled with two groups of students from Steyl via Leipzig to St. Gabriel's. In Leipzig Fr. Arnold left the train in order to travel to Marienbad (today in the Czech republic) to visit the

MISSION IN TOGO

Through the superior of the Roman SVD community Fr. Arnold had inquired from the Propaganda what the chances were of taking over the Togo mission. The secretary of the Propaganda gave the following answer: "1. If we want to take over the Togo mission, we will have to negotiate with the Pallotines since Togo along with Cameroun was entrusted to them (but this was never announced and may have been only a tentative and oral agreement. 2. It would not be difficult to get a mission in East Africa, to the north of Fr. Amrhein [Mission Benedictines]. If we decide to go there, we must contact the East African Society [a German colonial society]. They will assign the location for a central residence; the boundaries of the mission will be determined later. Cardinal Lavigerie, into whose mission the boundaries of the German protectorate extend, will gladly surrender a part of it. 3. German Southwest Africa could be given to us immediately. ... It seems His Excellency has already given some thought to the matter. He offered us Southwest Africa and East Africa immediately; he is not opposed to our getting Togo. But it would seem he prefers that we take over Southwest Africa (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, p. 279-280).

When Fr. Arnold himself visited the secretary of the Propaganda on January 30, 1891, the latter told him "that there were no prospects in Togo at the moment" (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p.631).

THE STEYL MISSION IN SOUTH SHANTUNG IN 1890

In the report for 1890 we read: in the area entrusted to us Steyl missionaries there are 2733 baptized adult Christians; 720 of them were baptized in 1890. There were 54 schools with 1205 students. 100 teachers, male and female catechists were employed; there were 25 Chinese seminarians and two Chinese priests already working as missionaries. There were 25 foreign missionaries, 19 priests and 6 Brothers. About 12 million people in South Shantung were not baptized "(Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], 18, No. 5).



Bernard Eikenbrock
first novicedirector



Arnold Janssen / Ferdinand Medits
advisor



Divine Word Missionaries Secretariat Arnold Janssen Steyl

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The Arnoldus Family Story

NOVEMBER 1890 – THE SECOND GENERAL CHAPTER BEGINS AND IS POSTPONED

November 3, 1890 – Opening of the General Chapter



In the afternoon of November 3, 1890 the second SVD General Chapter began in St. Gabriel's (Vienna/Austria). The capitulars were Arnold and John Janssen, Hermann Wegener, John Baptist Anzer and Bernard Eikenbrock.

Main Topic

The main topic was the draft of a Rule for the future sisters' congregation. "The first relevant question, namely, whether it was appropriate to call a mission institute for women into being, was unanimously answered with Yes by the General Chapter" (Alt, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, *Journey in Faith*, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 342). The Chapter also decided to invite Vincentian Fr. Medits, in an advisory role, to the discussions on the Sisters' Rule. "The title chosen for the sisters was '*Ancillae Spiritus Sancti*', Servants of the Holy Spirit (see *ibid.*, pp 342-343). Besides the Sisters' rule it was resolved "that our [SVD] Rule should be revised again in such a way that all rules, including those concerning the lay brothers, be compiled as *Regulae* or *Constitutiones communes* [common rules or constitutions] and separated from the *Regulae speciales* [special rules] which concern the government of the Society and the priests" (*ibid.*, p. 230).

Delegate from China

On November 4, 1890 it was resolved to invite the priests of South Shantung to send a delegate. However, if they did it would mean that the chapter had to be interrupted for two or three months. After quite some time Fr. Freinademetz sent a telegram that they would not send a delegate (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila, Logos Publications, 1975, p. 293).

A huge surprise

On November 6 – to the complete surprise of the chapter- Bishop Anzer declared “he was going to leave the Society. He did not attend the sessions again until the afternoon of 9 November” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 228).

On November 8 the Bishop handed Fr. Arnold three conditions; their content is not known (*ibid.*, p. 490). The chapter decided to agree to the first, reject the second and the third finally was accepted under a certain condition (*ibid.*, 489-490). On behalf of the chapter, Fr. Eikenbrock negotiated with the Bishop; so on November 9 the Bishop attended the sessions again.

November 11 – The Chapter is postponed

On this day the chapter was postponed.

GERMAN PROTECTORATE FOR THE STEYL MISSIONARIES IN SOUTH-SHANTUNG

November 23, 1890 Bishop Anzer “submitted [to the German government] the application to place himself, his mission and its personnel, under the protection of the German Reich” and the German chancellor [head of government] “approved the request the same day” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, p. 256). In gratitude, Anzer was awarded “the Order of the Red Eagle, Second Class with Star” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 431).

A STEYL MISSION HOUSE IN GERMANY

To found a mission house in Germany, Fr. Arnold needed the permission of the German government in Berlin. Since the mission house would need a school to train missionaries, the Minister of Culture/Education, Gossler, was the man Fr. Arnold had to negotiate with. The main problem for him was whether the Steyl missionaries were a religious congregation. If that were the case, he would not give permission, since only those congregations were admitted into Prussia which had been there before the cultural war. Arnold Janssen then told him “that we were not yet a religious order in the ecclesiastical sense but it could be that I would decide it would be necessary to be such; in this case the minister would surely not throw us out. He replied that the question was embarrassing for him and for the time being he could not give an answer.” He first would have to study the relevant laws and consult with his colleagues (*ibid.*, p. 435).

Fr. Arnold’s own advisor was Prince Bishop Kopp of Breslau, who was quite influential with the German government. When the two of them met in Berlin on December 17, 1890, the Bishop drafted a letter to the minister which Fr. Arnold then wrote and signed. The letter states: “The undersigned, most obedient Superior of the mission society of Steyl, plans to establish in Germany several educational institutions for the training of missionaries who are to work in the German colonies. The aforementioned society is an ordinary mission society and therefore does not fall under article 5 of the law of 29 April 1887” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, p.259). Still on December 17 the Prince Bishop himself delivered the letter to the Minister “who read it and was apparently satisfied” (*ibid.*). And on December 22

the Minister recommended to the head of the German government, that permission could be given to start a mission house (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 439, footnote 214).

FIRST BROTHERS LEAVE FOR ARGENTINA

On December 13, 1890 the Brothers Eustachius Karl Werling and Alexius Karl Michael began their journey to Argentina. They were the first SVD-Brothers to be appointed for Argentina.

A GLANCE INTO THE HEART OF FR. ARNOLD JANSSEN

When on November 6 Bishop Anzer threatened to leave the SVD, Fr. Arnold was deeply shocked. On December 24 he wrote a letter to the Bishop: “Since November 6, I have suffered great anguish of heart because of what has developed between us. I have already recited the psalm *Miserere* many times and have asked the Holy Spirit to grant me understanding, repentance and forgiveness in as much as I myself have been at fault. May God grant your Excellency an abundance of light from the Holy Spirit that you may also understand all that has happened. I am certain that then everything will turn out well. What has happened is completely contrary to the fine relationship that should exist between us. I believe that it is imperative that we try to remedy the situation. To this end it would be helpful if we were to speak frankly and openly to one another. Then perhaps the situation will improve. ... But first, the relationship between us must be straightened out. In particular I must know what your Excellency thinks about the incident of 6 November” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, p. 297-298).

A LETTER TO EMPEROR FANZ JOSEPH OF AUSTRIA

Prince Bishop Gruscha of Vienna had informed Fr. Arnold that the Emperor wanted the Bishop to give him a report about St. Gabriel’s. Therefore, on January 6, 1891, Fr. Arnold wrote his own report to the Emperor. In it we read among other things: “The missionary efforts of St. Gabriel’s mission house and respectful request for His Majesty’s good will and protection. ... Our congregation, the Society of the Divine Word, was admitted into this part of the empire through the supreme decision of October 14, 1888, for which I once again thank your imperial and royal Majesty most humbly. The goal of our congregation is the spread of the Catholic faith particularly in foreign countries. At the same time we want to serve the special religious interests of Austria in as far as our weak powers permit, without interfering in the intentions of the highest ecclesiastical authorities and the rights of others. In doing so we do not exclude any continent. However, I want to name especially Europe, the Near East as well as Africa, even though I do not know in how far these will be of concern.

Obviously, for the solution of our tasks we would not only need the good will of the bishops but also the good will and the protection of your imperial and royal Majesty and your government. How happy I would be, if your Majesty gracefully assured us of this” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen und Österreich im Jahre 1891* [Arnold Janssen and Austria in the year 1891], Nova et Vetera, March 1970, p. 62).

4. Hence, the sisters will be divided into Cloistered and Missionary Sisters, similar to the former distinction between choir and lay sisters. Both groups take the usual three vows” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p.343).

April 22, 1891

“The four capitulars, Arnold Janssen, Bishop Anzer, Hermann Wegener and Bernhard Eikenbrock requested the following permission from the Bishop” on this day:

a) “That for the Missionary Sisters a provisional Rule might be drawn up, based on the above directives and presented to Your Lordship for approbation;

b) “That we make a small start and experiment with the Cloistered Sisters and that, therefore, some thought already be given to them in the above-mentioned Rule” (*ibid.* p. 344).

April 24, 1891

On this day Arnold Janssen personally carried a copy of the basic characteristics of the statutes, the formal request of the capitulars and his own letter of thanksgiving to Bishop Boermans of Roermond and “I received his oral approbation”, Fr. Arnold wrote (*ibid.*, p. 345).

April 25, 1891

While on the previous day Fr. Arnold had presented the request to start with the congregation of the missionary sisters to the SVD’s local ordinary, the Bishop of Roermond, on April 25, Fr. Arnold had another great joy: he was able to present to the SVD’s very own and first Bishop, John Baptist Anzer, six candidates for ordination to the priesthood and nine for the subdiaconate (*ibid.*).

END OF THE SECOND SVD GENERAL CHAPTER

APRIL 27, 1891

On this day the chapter was concluded with the signatures of the four members present: Arnold Janssen, John Baptist Anzer, Hermann Wegener and Bernhard Eikenbrock (*ibid.*, p. 228).



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The Arnoldus Family Story

FEBRUARY 1891

AN INTERESTING EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

February 7

Miss Leitner, the visionary living in Vienna /Austria, writes to Bishop Anzer who was in St. Gabriel’s: she had to suffer a lot on his behalf because the Bishop “was not on good terms with Superior Janssen” (Bornemann, *Ferdinand Medits und Magdalene Leitner, Verbum Supplementum 4*, Rome 1968, p. 129).

February 8

Bishop Anzer replies to Miss Leitner: “Don’t worry, I am not leaving the Society”. Also on this day the Bishop wrote to Arnold Janssen.

February 11

Arnold Janssen answers Bishop Anzer.

Right up to the present time he had hoped for the Bishop to change his heart and so he had reported nothing [about Anzer’s threat to leave the SVD] to the Propaganda. As to the other points “*it would be better to discuss them by word of mouth, as I trust that the Holy Spirit will finish the work He had begun, and that a better relationship will set in. To this end, I urge Your Episcopal Grace: let both of us seek to make ourselves worthy of the divine light by most earnestly praying the Psalm Miserere during the interval. Because nothing will last that does not have its root and ground in humility*” (Arnold Janssen, *Letters to China*, Vol I (1879-1897), ed. Jos. Alt, transl. Frank Michalic, Vincent Fecher, *Analecta – 83/1*, Rome 2002, p.307-308).

February 14

Bishop Anzer replies to Arnold Janssen: He can see “there has been a lot of misunderstanding. How nice it would have been, if we had gotten together earlier! For my part, reconciliation and a better relationship is not only possible, it is something that I want, downright long for” (*ibid.*, p.308, footnote 7)

AUDIENCE OF BISHOP ANZER WITH POPE LEO XIII

On March 5, 1891 Bishop Anzer had an audience with Pope Leo XIII. First he gave the pope a book as present from the German Emperor as a sign of his appreci-

ation of the Pope. “The Holy Father accepted the above-mentioned gift with special pleasure (*Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote* [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], 18, No. 7, April 1891, p. 56). At the same time the Pope agreed orally to the Bishop’s request to have the Holy Spirit painted in the human form of a young man - something that had been forbidden. Bishop Anzer himself wrote and signed the paper containing the Pope’s permission (Hartwich, *Steyler Missionare in China*, [Steyl Missionaries in China], *Analecta SVD* – 61/1, p. 197).

NEWS FROM THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE SVD GENERAL CHAPTER IN ST. GABRIEL’S

The General Chapter which had begun in November 1890 and had been postponed in the same month was resumed on March 14.

March 19, 1891

A new rule

From March 19 to April 1, 1891 the main issue was the new Rule which the founder’s brother, Rev. John Janssen, had written. The rule is new “to the extent that the draft and lay-out is new; it is old to the extent that most of the essential regulations are from the old Rule and the definition of the special goal of the Society is taken word for word from the old Rule” (Jos. Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 230).

Discussion topics

One topic was the beard of the confreres in Europe: “The proposal to ask Rome if beards could be worn in Europe was turned down ‘because the application did not have sufficient support from the confreres asked about it.’”

Furthermore, a decision was made regarding smoking in South Shantung: “1. Missionaries who wish to smoke outside the residence may do so. 2. It is the wish of the Chapter that those missionaries who observe the no-smoking rule would continue to do so.” Obviously, so Fr. Alt comments, “this resolution could not be communicated to all the Society and Arnold Janssen did not like it.”

The chapter also discussed a new order of studies: five years of lower studies, two years of philosophy, theology including novitiate, four years. In the second year of novitiate a greater study load could be undertaken. “The last semester of theology should be used as a more immediate preparation for the holy priesthood” (*ibid.*, p. 231).

March 29 - A new General Council

Arnold Janssen remained Superior General. The two general councilors Rev. Wegener and John Janssen were confirmed in office and Rev. Holthausen and Blum were newly elected. The term of office was until the next general chapter. “There is a basic principle for the general council, for matters of greater importance absent councilors will be consulted by mail; day to day affairs will be settled by the councilors who are present” (*ibid.*, p. 230).



Hermann Wegener



Joh. Janssen



Arnold Janssen



Nikolaus Blum



Joh. Holthausen

Division into provinces

The Society was divided provisionally into the following provinces: “Europe with the three foundations in Steyl, Rome and St. Gabriel’s: China with the houses in South Shantung; America which at that time only consisted of Argentina as a *provincia minor*” (*ibid.*).

April 5 and 9 - A joyful event

On April 5, Bishop Anzer ordained his nephew, Rev. John Weig, to the priesthood in St. Gabriel’s. On April 9 the newly ordained priest celebrated his first holy Mass, while his uncle, Bishop Anzer, assisted.

April 6, 1891 - Postponement and Transfer of the General Chapter

On this day the chapter was postponed and moved to Steyl.

GOOD NEWS FROM STEYL

On April 7, 1891, in Steyl the summer semester 1891 was begun with a solemn high Mass. “The number of our students, including the newcomers, is 247” (*Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote* [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], 18, No. 8, May 1894, p. 64).

THIRD PERIOD OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER (APRIL 19.-27., 1891)

In Steyl the third period of the General Chapter began on April 19.

The founding of the Missionary Sisters

April 20, 1891

The chapter decided to ask the Bishop of Roermond, to approve “the basic characteristics of this institute” of the Missionary Sisters:

1. “An institute of sisters is to be established under the name of ‘Congregation of the Servants of the Holy Spirit’” (*in Latin: Societas servarum Spiritus Sancti*).

2. “The primary purpose of this society shall be: To support by prayer and work the activities of the priests of the Society of the Divine Word, by working especially in the missions for the benefit of their own sex, which is naturally more appropriate for women than for men.”

3. Although all sisters are to pray for the greater honor of the Holy Spirit, for the greater sanctification of the priestly state and true reverence of the sacraments, one section of the sisters is to make this task the main purpose of their lives.”

the experience of the Holy Ghost missionaries and the Trappists in Natal. Their success will be our inspiration. We can hope to emulate their achievements because we have so many missionary Brothers who know farming and the manual trades in which they were engaged here in the seminary.” Finally, Fr. Arnold asked Msgr. Montel to “present the case as effectively as possible before the Propaganda” (*ibid.*).

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN AUGUST 1891

August 15, 1891

Fr. Arnold once again appointed Helena Stollenwerk superior of the small community of the future missionary sisters.

August 24, 1891 - The new mission house in Prussia

In the minutes of the General Council’s meeting of this day we read: “Rev. Fr. Superior brought a letter of the Prussian minister of education to the notice of the council. It said that nothing stood in the way of the establishment of a mission house in Prussia and we could count on his (the minister’s) support. In the minister’s letter Fr. Superior missed the concession regarding teachers and expressed his reservations about beginning the foundation without it. The rest of the councilors were of the opinion that it would be best to accept the minister’s statement and take a gamble with a small beginning.” In the huge kingdom of Prussia the mission house was to be located in Silesia which in those days belonged to Prussia and today to Poland. The reasons for choosing Silesia as the location for the new mission house were:

- “a) because of the need for such an institution in the country itself;
- b) because of the substantial help provided by the Huch family [Mrs. Huch had given him the original idea of a mission house there];
- c) because of the great courtesy of the Prince-Bishop” (*Jos. Alt, Journey in Faith, p.440*).

To the participants of the last General Chapter Pope Francis said:

REMEMBER THE ORIGINS, THE ROOTS AND LOVE THEM!

THINK OF CEMETERIES IN DISTANT REGIONS;

IN ASIA, AFRICA, AMAZONIA:

MANY OF YOU ARE THERE –

HAVING DIED YOUNG AND HAVING GIVEN THEIR LIVES.

DO NOT FORGET: ROOTS AND CEMETERY!



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SOME EVENTS IN MAY AND JUNE 1891

May 1, 1891

On this day Adolphine Tönnies entered Steyl. At the beginning of the novitiate she received the name Sr. Michaela and later as Mother Mary Michaela she became the co-foundress of the Adoration Sisters. Before entering Steyl she worked as a teacher in a Catholic School in Northern Germany. One of her talents was to play the keyboard and soon after her entering Steyl she gave music lessons to the future sisters.

May 7, 1891

Fr. Arnold wrote a circular to all members of the society about the proceedings and work of the second General Chapter. “It was to be passed on to all the houses of the Society” (*Jos. Alt, Journey in Faith, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 229*).

May 10/14, 1891

In Goch Fr. Arnold’s mother, Anna Katharina Janssen died at the age of almost 82. On May 14, Fr. Arnold celebrated the Requiem Mass for her and the parish priest of Goch conducted the funeral.



June 21, 1891

Once again Fr. Arnold took up work on the Sisters’ rule. It was to be modeled on the SVD Rule, but with appropriate adjustments to the life of the Sisters (*ibid.*, p. 347f).

June 29, 1891

Adolphine Tönnies’ entering Steyl had born first fruits. The singing practices conducted by her enabled the sister postulants to enhance with their joyful singing the first High Mass celebrated in their chapel, as Mother Maria wrote in her chronicle.

NEW MISSION HOUSE IN PRUSSIA – NEW MISSION IN AFRICA

Correspondence Arnold Janssen – Paul Kayser / Wish of Cardinal Simeoni

July 4, 1891

Fr. Arnold had a very good relationship with Mr. Paul Kayser, the head of the colonial office in Berlin. To Mr. Kayser he wrote on July 4, that he had not undertaken any further steps regarding a mission house in Prussia. Concerning the acceptance

of a mission in Africa, the Propaganda Fide favoured it. And then Fr. Janssen connected the issue of a new mission house with the acceptance of a new mission in the German protectorate areas: “As soon as I am assured of the necessary support for our seminary in Prussia, I am resolved to take the matter of a mission in the German colonies seriously in hand” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila 1975, p. 280).

July 12, 1891

Mr Kayser answered Fr. Arnold: “... Concerning your choice of a mission territory, the Government has no objections to Togo, though it is not a very healthful place. Still we do not wish to offend the Pallotines who have always been most obliging. The matter is one for the Propaganda to decide.” He was definitely opposed to South West Africa, partly in deference to the old Protestant mission there. He thought the right place for Steyl was the area around Lake Tanganyika in Uganda, “where the White Fathers are ... Most of them are Alsations but the superiors are French. It is his wish that missionaries trained in Germany and working under German superiors, be sent to East Africa” (*ibid.*, p. 280f).

On this day Prince Bishop Kopp of Breslau wrote to Fr. Arnold, “that the Imperial Chancellor in Berlin wanted to take a closer look at Steyl’s application about Togo now and was waiting for the corresponding steps to be taken” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 634).

July 16, 1891

Bornemann writes: “By a remarkable coincidence, Cardinal Simeoni of the Propaganda wrote only a few days later.” “I am very much concerned about the missions in South Africa. It is no longer possible to cope with the growing needs. More missionaries are needed to maintain the Catholic position against the Protestants. When Your Reverence was in Rome recently, I suggested that you select some territory in South Africa which would then be given the status of an independent mission and entrusted to your society. May I ask Your Reverence to inform us as soon as possible whether you are able to accept a mission in that area” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Jansen*, Manila, p. 281).

South Africa according to the understanding of the Propaganda

Fr. Arnold realized that South Africa, in the Propaganda’s view, seems to have meant all of the African continent south of the Sahara. Looking for a mission area, he limited himself to the German colonies. “That meant I would have to make a thorough study of travelogues, books and mission reports lest I venture rashly into unknown waters. So I immediately ordered various books, the most important travelogues, and so forth, and studied them as thoroughly as I could. All but the most necessary work I set aside. There was so much to learn: health conditions, climate, location, ethnic background of the tribes, rainy season, dry season, the possibility of having the entire mission transferred [to the SVD], future plans, etc.” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila, p. 281).

THE DECISION ABOUT THE PREFERRED AREAS FOR A MISSION IN AFRICA

The preferred areas

On August 5, 1891 Fr. Arnold and his councilors decided to request Togo from the Propaganda in first place and in second place a mission in East Africa.

What areas in East Africa were under consideration? Fr. Arnold writes: “For a long time I did not know myself. Only yesterday – the eve of the last session – I got a clear idea of the health hazards in German East Africa from a report in the *German Colonial Review*.” The report cited exact statistics about the cases of malaria and other illnesses among Europeans and local people. So he decided in favor of the most healthful location, Saadani harbour... and the adjacent regions of Usega and Nguru, about 17000 square kilometers. “On the map it looks somewhat small. I hope the Holy Ghost Fathers won’t mind the division. After all they have not yet opened any stations in that direction. Besides, after Kilva, Saadani is the most healthful place along the coast, and the hinterland is beautiful.. With Bagamayo it has developed into the jumping-off point for caravans setting out to the Great Lakes” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila, p.281-282).

Further Plans for East Africa

Fr. Arnold usually thought big, and so he did here as well. He thought that from Saadani as starting point “later on other missions could be taken over in the Sudan in the north. The Austrian ambassador in Rome had told him as well as Bishop Anzer “that the Austrian protectorate over a few mission stations along the Upper Nile might serve as the basis for a larger Austrian mission in which the interests of Church and State might coincide.” Fr. Arnold was agreeable to this suggestion, “since Austria had allowed him to build the major seminary of St. Gabriel in Vienna.” But to do so now was impossible for him - later it might be possible. (*ibid.*, p. 282).

Application to Cardinal Simeoni

On this very same August 5, 1891 Fr. Arnold wrote this application to Cardinal Simeoni: “In the first place I ask for Togo, the German colony in Africa which has a population of about 600 000, but no missionaries. If this is not possible, I ask in the second place for a small part of the apostolic vicariate of Zanzibar. ... It comprises about one third of the entire vicariate and one-eighth of the German part of the vicariate. As far as I know, no mission station has been erected there.” (*ibid.*)

Letter to Msgr. Montel in the Vatican

The application was accompanied by a letter of instructions to Msgr. Montel in the Vatican: “Because of its importance, the matter has caused me a good deal of trouble... A thoroughgoing study had to be made. ... We must choose first of all a place that is not too difficult, where we can test our strength and ability and find out what we are capable of doing. The experience we gain there will show us how much more we can do later on. The Holy See is also interested that we begin in a place where success is not so doubtful and which is neither too harmful to the health of the missionaries nor too difficult to reach. In the territory referred to, we shall be able to profit from

clearly, ‘Since the Society has received papal approval I can no longer give a dispensation. This is the law for recognized congregations; only the Pope dispenses’” (*ibid.*, p. 238).

VOWS ONLY ON THE FIRST PART OF THE 1891 RULE

The bishop of Roermond had only approved the first part of the new rule, which had been translated from Latin into German and was valid for both priests and brothers; the vows were only taken on this part, not on the second and third part which were approved by the bishop only in 1892. On October 29, 1891 Fr. Arnold wrote to Fr. Superior Becher in Argentina: He did not see it as a problem, since the *regulae de regimini* [rules about governance] would only become effective when someone took over an office. The third part of the rule was only for the priests and was like the one of 1885, only divided into constitutions and statutes. Furthermore the founder had informed the confreres of those two parts (Alt, *Arnold Janssen, Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], vol. I, p. 41).

The religious habit and Rule of the Missionary Sisters

On October 27, Fr. Arnold visited Bishop Boermans in Roermond and wrote in his ‘Memoriale’: “Bishop Boermans approved the blue habit of the Missionary Sisters and agreed that they might begin their novitiate on 8 December” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 352).

On October 29, Fr. Arnold travelled to St. Gabriel. In his absence in Steyl Fr. Steger bought the material for the habit. “The sisters did their best to pattern the clothes after the picture [drawn by Br. Lucas] and with the Lord’s help they succeeded”, as Mother Josepha remembered (Mulberge, *Apostolic Novices, In their own Words...5*, p.8).

From St. Gabriel Fr. Arnold wrote on November 20 to the sisters in Steyl that he had begun doing final work on the Sisters’ Rule: “As soon as it has been copied, and any amendments incorporated which the Bishop may require, I will present it to the sisters and discuss it with each individual sister” (Jos. Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 348).



THE ETERNAL WORD HAS ENTERED OUR EARTHLY LIFE,
SO THAT WE WOULD BECOME HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS:
GOD’S SON HAS TRULY BECOME OUR BROTHER!

(Arnold Janssen)

Blessed and merry Christmas to all!



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The Arnoldus Family Story

SEPTEMBER 1981

During this month in Steyl the deliberations about the Rule for the Holy Spirit Sisters continued. The participants were Arnold Janssen, Hermann Wegener, Bernard Eikenbrock and from December 13, John Janssen as well.

Investiture and religious habit

On September 8, 1891 Fr. Arnold informed the Holy Spirit Sisters’ postulants that the first investiture would probably be on December 8, 1891, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The Postulants were overjoyed, for some of them had waited “to receive the religious habit for so long.” However, nobody knew what the style and colour of the habit was to be (in Jacqueline Mulberge SSpS, *Apostolic Novices, In their own words*, no. 5, p.7).

A few days later the founder showed them “a picture of a nun in a blue dress and scapular and white veil,” drawn by the well-known Steyl artist, Bro. Lucas Kolzem SVD. Mother Maria notes in her chronicle that the Sisters were very happy to be clothed in the same way as the Mother of God and Immaculate spouse of the Holy Spirit was in her mortal life. The blue habit was to remind the Sisters of Mary’s purity, modesty and humility and it should inspire them to imitate those virtues as much as they could.



Sessions of the General Council – the most important topics

The most important topics for the General Council’s meetings of September 14, 15, 18 and 21 were the Rule of the Sisters, the building of a church in St. Gabriel’s and a new mission house in Silesia.

The revision of the first SVD Rule – Report of the canon lawyer Prof. Drehmanns

In the midst of these sessions, on September 17, Fr. Arnold got the report of Prof. Drehmanns whom Bishop Boermans of Roermond had given the task to revise the 1885 SVD Rule.

He had previously advised the founder to “draw up the constitutions as briefly as possible like a statute book – that is, brief, clear, ... avoiding all theological and ascetical considerations.” Yet when he received the revised rule from Fr. Arnold he reacted with surprise and wrote: “Now I see, however, from your last communication that this was not your view and that you are seeking episcopal approval for both [the

constitutions and statutes].” Since he believed that Fr. Arnold planned to present the Rule also to Rome for approval, he quoted from a Roman book about the approval of rules: In the rule questions “about virtue and vows should not be mixed with questions concerning the essence of the vows.” He then made a few proposals about writing the rule according to Roman norms. Yet Fr. Arnold “did not listen to this sincere advice”, Fr. Alt writes, in spite of the fact that the prepared text “contravened all these warnings and suggestions in the extreme” (Josef Alt, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, *Journey in Faith*, p.232-234).

Rule or Constitutions - the proper name

Prof. Drehmanns drew Fr. Arnold’s attention to another important matter: “Besides, the word “Rule” should not be used; there are only four well-known “Rules” – the Augustinian, Benedictine, Franciscan, and Dominican. In the case of later congregations the regulations are called constitutions” (*ibid.*, p.233). Yet in general the word “rule” continued to be used.

The Rule of the Sisters

The General Council concluded its deliberations about the Sisters’ Rule on September 18.

OCTOBER 1891

October 16/17 – The revised SVD Rule

The rule had three parts; the first one was for priests and brothers together and had been translated from the Latin original into German; on October 16 it was approved by Bishop Boermans of Roermond. The second and third parts, written in Latin, were approved by the Bishop on December 26, 1892.

After the episcopal approval had been given, so Fr. Arnold wrote to St. Gabriel’s, “much work had to be done by typesetters, printers and binders. But they succeeded! On Saturday evening at 7:30 I was able to distribute the first ten copies and today more of them. It seems everything is going well... The lovely little book is generally welcomed. May the Rule itself be kept and loyally followed”(Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 234). The title of the Rule Book was: “Allgemeine Constitutionen und Statuten der Gesellschaft des Göttlichen Wortes von 1891” = Common Constitutions and Statutes of the Society of the Divine Word of 1891.

October 25 – Vows on the new rule

On October 25, 1891, vows were taken on the new rule and there was also a transfer of the vows made in 1885 to the new rule of 1891; the solemn celebration was held in the presence of Bishop Boermans of Roermond. The celebration began with a Mass celebrated by the Bishop, beginning at 8:30 am. After the gospel the choir sang a four voice Veni Creator, the prologue of the gospel according to John was sung and the vow celebration began. “Then one by one,” so Fr. Arnold wrote to Fr. Superior Becher in Argentina, “we went to the altar to make our profession, first I alone by decree of his Lordship, then all the others in four groups. Seven priests took

their perpetual vows on the new rule... as well as three Brothers (Martinus, Marcolinus and Bernardus); Brothers Augustinus and Matthias took second vows, and twenty-one priests, eight deacons and fifty-four brothers transferred their vows. There was no actual *acceptatio votorum* [acceptance of the vows in the name of God or the Society]. During the ceremony, however, Mgr. Boermans sat on the predella of the high altar, and one after another we handed him our vow document and received the new Rule from him (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 235-236).

In the mission magazine Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart] of December 1891 we read: When the Bishop handed the little Rule Book to the priests and brothers he said: “Most beloved sons, receive the Rule of the Society of the Divine Word. It is your duty to live according to it in future. When you learn this with the assistance of the Holy Spirit and with pious sentiment and observe it in what you do, you will see the Triune God in the glory of his saints.”

After the vow ceremony the bishop greeted the professed priests and brothers in German with a short homily ; he concluded with the words: “When you observe faithfully what the rule prescribes, I, your old bishop, tell you, you will receive eternal life in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen”. The sacramental blessing concluded the celebration. It was now 12:30 – four hours after it had begun. The 76 year old bishop showed no sign of being tired!

NO ACCEPTATIO VOTORUM – private vows

Fr. Arnold wrote that there was no ACCEPTATIO VOTORUM, that means they were not received in the name of God or the Society. The vows therefore were private and not public vows. The Superior General could dispense from private vows.

However, the Bishop and Prof. Drehmanns, in approving the rule, “had inserted the addition, ‘before you, Reverend Father, as Superior General of the Society’ into the vow formula. That was the classical formula for the vows known as canonical and public”, Fr. Alt writes (Jos. Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 237).

But on October 25, “the formulation used was, ‘... before you, Most Reverend Bishop, and before you, Reverend Father, as Superior General of the Society.’ Precisely from the juxtaposition of bishop and Superior General we could conclude that the word ‘before’ is interpreted as when someone is a witness to an official document. Bishop and Superior General were witnesses to the confrere having made the vows (*ibid.*). Therefore we read in no. 25 of the 1891 Rule: “With us the vows are to be taken in such a way that no reception in the name of God or the Society takes place, so that the confreres, even though they imitate religious life in many ways, are not truly and rightly religious, and so the clerics remain in the state of secular priests and are not subject to those rules of canon law which are valid for religious” (in *Fontes Historici Societatis Verbi Divini*, vol. I, p. 216).

For Fr. Arnold all of this changed once the Society was recognized as a papal society on January 25, 1901. “From this date on he no longer felt he had the authority to give dispensation from the vows. He no longer regarded them as *vota privata* [private vows]. The recognition of the Society by the highest ecclesiastical authority made the vows a ‘public matter’, *vota publica* [public vows]. Thus he wrote in one case quite